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THE KINGS DECLARATION

TO ALL HIS

SUBJECTS,

Of whatsoever Nation, Quality, or Condition.

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Charles I, K. of Gr. Brit.

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To all my People, of whatſoever Nation, Quality or Condition.

AM I thus laid aſide, and muſt I not ſpeak for my ſelf? No! I will ſpeak, & that to all my People, (which I would have rather done, by the way of my two Houſes of Parliament, but that there is a publick Order, neither to make addreſſes to, or receive Meſſage from me) and who but you can be judge of the differences betwixt Me, and my two Houſes? I know none elſe; for I am ſure, you it is, who will enjoy the happineſſe, or feel the miſery, of good, or ill Government; And we all pretend who ſhould run faſteſt to ſerve you; without having a regard (at leaſt in the firſt place) to particular Intereſts: And therefore I deſire you to conſider the ſtate I am, and have been, in, this long time, and whether my Actions have more tended to the Publick, or my own particular good; for whoſoever will look upon me, barely, as I am Man, without that liberty (which the meaneſt of my Subjects enjoyes) of going whither, and converſing with whom I will: As a Husband and Father, without the comfort of my Wife and Children; or laſtly, as a King, without the leaſt ſhew of Authority or Power, to protect my diſtreſſed Subjects; Muſt conclude me, not only voide of all Na-

turall Affection, but alſo to want common underſtanding; if I ſhould not moſt cheerfully embrace the readieſt way, to the ſettlement of theſe diſtracted Kingdoms: As alſo on the other ſide, doe but conſider the forme and draught of the Bils lately preſented unto me, and as they are the conditions of a Treaty, ye will conclude, that the ſame ſpirit which hath ſtill been able to fruſtrate all my ſincere and conſtant endeavours for Peace, hath had a powerfull influence on this Meſſage; for though I was ready to grant the ſubſtance, and comply with what they ſeeme to deſire; yet as they had framed it, I could not agree thereunto, without deeply wounding my Conſcience and Honour, and betraying the truſt repoſed in me, by abandoning my People to the Arbitrary and Unlimited Power of the two Houſes for ever, for the leavying and maintaining of Land or Sea Forces, without diſtinction of quality, or limitation for Mony taxes: And if I could have paſſed them in termes; how unheard-of a condition were it for a Treaty, to grant beforehand the moſt conſiderable part of the ſubject matter? How ineffectuall were that Debate like to prove, wherein the moſt potent Party had nothing of moment leſt to aske; and the other nothing more to give? So conſequently, how hopeleſſe of mutuall complyance? Without which, a ſettlement is impoſſible: Beſides, if after my conceſſions, the two Houſes ſhould inſiſt on thoſe things, from which I cannot depart; how deſperate would the condition of theſe Kingdomes be, when the moſt proper and approved remedy ſhould become ineffectuall? Being therefore fully reſolved, that I could neither in Conſcience, Honour, or Prudence, paſſe thoſe foure Bils; I onely endeavour'd to make the Reaſons

and

and Juſtice of my Denyall appear to all the world, as they doe to Me, intending to give as little diſſatisfaction to the two Houſes of Parliament, (without betraying my own Cauſe) as the matter would beare: I was deſirous to give my Anſwer, of the 28. of *December* laſt, to the Commiſſioners Sealed, (as I had done others heretofore, and ſometimes at the deſire of the Commiſſioners) cheefly, becauſe when my Meſſages or Anſwers were publickly known, before they were read in the Houſes; prejuditiall interpretations were forced on them, much differing, and ſometimes contrary to my meaning: For example, my Anſwer from *Hampton-court*, was accuſed of dividing the two Nations, becauſe I promiſed to give ſatisfaction to the *Scots*, in all things concerning that Kingdome: And this laſt ſuffers in a contrary ſenſe, by making me intend to intereſt *Scotland* in the Lawes of this Kingdome, (then which nothing was, nor is, further from my thoughts) becauſe I took notice of the *Scots* Commiſſioners proteſting againſt the Bils and Propoſitions, as contrary to the intereſts and engagements of the two Kingdomes: Indeed, if I had not mentioned their diſſent; an Objection, not without ſome probability, might have been made againſt me, both in reſpect the *Scots* are much concern'd in the Bill for the Militia, and in ſeverall other Propoſitions; and my ſilence might, with ſome Juſtice, have ſeemed to approve of it: But the Commiſſioners refuſing to receive my Anſwer Sealed, (upon the engagement of their, and the Governors Honour, that no other uſe ſhould be made, or notice taken of it, then as if it had not been ſeen) read and delivered it open unto them; Whereupon, what hath ſince paſſed, either by the Governour, in diſcharging

moſt of my Servants, redoubling the Guards, & reſtraining me of my former liberty, (and all this, as himſelf confeſt, meerly out of his owne diſlike of my Anſwer, notwithſtanding his beforeſaid Engagement) or afterwards, by the two Houſes, (as the Governour affirmes) in confining me within the circuit of this Caſtle, I appeale to God, and the World, whether my ſaid Anſwer deſerved the reply of ſuch proceedings: beſides the unlawfulneſſe for Subjects to impriſon their King: That, by the permiſſion of Almighty God, I am reduced to this ſad condition, as I no way repine, ſo I am not without hope, but that the ſame God, will, in due time, conver: theſe Afflictions into my advantage: in the meane time, I am confident to beare theſe croſſes with patience, and a great equality of Minde: but by what meanes or occaſion I am come to this Relapſe in my Affaires, I am utterly to ſeek; eſpecially when I conſider, that I have ſacrificed, to my two Houſes of Parliament, for the Peace of the Kingdome, all, but, what is much more deare to me then my Life, *My Conſcience and Honour*; deſiring nothing more, then to performe it, in the moſt proper and naturall way, *A Perſonall Treaty*. But that which makes me moſt at a loſſe, is, the remembring my ſignall complyance with the Army, and their intereſts; and of what importance my Complyance was to them; and their often repeated Profeſſions and Ingagements, for my juſt Rights, in generall, at *Newmarket* and S. *Albans*; and their particular explanation of thoſe generals, by their Voted and Re-voted Propoſals; which I had reaſon to underſtand ſhould be the utmoſt extremity would be expected from me, and that, in ſome things therein, I ſhould be eaſed; (herein appealing to the Conſciences

ſciences of ſome of the chiefeſt Officers in the Army, if what I have ſaid, be not punctually true) and how I have failed of their expectations, or my profeſſions to them, I challenge them and the whole World to produce the leaſt colour of Reaſon. And now I would know, what it is that is deſired: Is it Peace? I have ſhewed the way (being both willing, and deſirous to performe my part in it) which is, a juſt compliance with all chief intereſts: Is it Plenty and Happineſſe? they are the inſeperable effects of Peace: Is it Security? I, who wiſh that all men would forgive and forget like Me, have offered the *Militia* for my time: Is it liberty of Conſcience? He who wants it, is moſt ready to give it: Is it the right adminiſtration of Juſtice? Officers of truſt are committed to the choice of my two Houſes of Parliament: Is it frequent Parliaments? I have legally, fully concurr'd therewith: Is it the Arrears of the Army? upon a ſettlement, they will certainly be payed with much eaſe; but before, there will be found much difficulty, if not impoſſibility in it.

Thus all the world cannot but ſee my reall & unwearied endeavours for Peace, the which (by the grace of God) I ſhall neither repent me of, nor ever be ſlackned in, notwithſtanding my paſt, preſent, or future, ſufferings; but, if I may not be heard, let every one judge, who it is that obſtructs the good I would, or might doe: What is it that men are afraid to hear from me? It cannot be Reaſon, (at leaſt, none will declare themſelves ſo unreaſonable as to confeſſe it) and it can leſſe be, impertinent or unreaſonable Diſcourſes; for thereby, peradventure I might more juſtifie this my Reſtraint, then the cauſers themſelves can do; ſo that, of all wonders yet this is the greateſt

greatest to me; but, it may be easily gathered, how those men intend to govern, who have used me thus: And if it be my hard Fate to fall together with the liberty of this Kingdome, I shall not blush for my selfe; but much lament the future miseries of my People; the which, I shall still pray to God to avert; what ever becomes of me.

CHARLES R.